





# The end of peasantry

By Eugen Weber

MICHEL GERVAIN, MARCEL JOLIVET and YVES TAVERNIER:  
Histoire de la France rurale  
Volume 4  
666pp. Paris: Seuil. 120 fr.

Like literacy, history is an urban art. It is not surprising that it has largely ignored folk and activities beyond its ken. The country could serve as backdrop, its inhabitants faceless, sunk in savagery and routine. Civilization was urban, like citizenship and civility; so were the affairs of the polis, which history was about. The record of men acting in time ignored the vast majority of mankind. La Bruyère's surprise was only paragoned, to see the dark world of the peasants, the globe reveal a human face. Noble savages overseas could provide inspiration; rural savages nearer to home evoked disgust, or fear, or pity.

This took a long time to change. Romantic historians treated "the people" in terms of city folk. Even Michelet, who tried to look beyond it, confessed that country people remained closed to him. The city poor imitated the better, wore their cast-off clothes, spoke (to speak) their language. The peasants lived in other cultures, with other ways, it seemed. Their speech was different—in the late nineteenth century a traveller near Limoges, not 300 miles from Paris, could not make himself understood. And they did not write. Records of peasant life and ways, when they exist, are second-hand: official, publicists, explorers, tourists and editors from the city speak of and sometimes for them. The literate peasant himself ceased to be a peasant, spoke a different language, handled a different culture, with a convert's zeal, despised or forgot his own. The documents on which traditional historians fed were absent.

In France, while most of its inhabitants lived on the land or very close to it, few cared what they were about. When their numbers began to shrink and their particular personality to fade, attention turned towards them. As "Fordre

eternel des chamois" was chipped away, amateurs sought to preserve it. The peasant was jealously his songs and dances, his feasts, his speech, his traditional wisdom and practices; folklorists and ethnologists started to collect them. Costumes and tools were stuffed into museums. Archives bulged with surveys of abandoned ways. Furniture shifted into the homes of the rich. Dishes that reflected poverty or provided occasional relief entered the cooking of the bourgeoisie.

Academic historians were among the last in France to devote serious research to this world that was passing. Perhaps because it was not passing quickly enough, it was because of the fairly narrow limits within which academic history was kept in France before Pélissier and Bee came along. At any rate, it could have been drawn from André Stepien's *Tableau politique de la France de l'Ouest sous la Troisième République* (1913) which dealt with a period too recent to count as history, the seminal studies appeared remarkably late. Marc Bloch's *Caractères originaux de l'histoire rurale française* (1931) showed how much agrarian history could do with kinds of document earlier scholars had ignored, but it was a rather lonely monument in its time. More recent, for a generation, the lessons learnt from it seemed limited to medievalists. Paul Bois's *Paysans de l'Ouest* only appeared in 1960, Leroy-Ladurie's *Paysans du Languedoc* in 1966.

Appropriately enough, that was when the genre began itself to disappear from the fields. Henri Mendras published *La Fin des paysans* in 1967. Like Nietzsche's announcement that God was dead, the debate that ensued turned largely on chronology. But the end of the peasant began the beginning of the first great history of rural France, of which this is the fourth and final volume.

Like its predecessors, it is a magnificent, sumptuously illustrated and richly documented (although one rather wishes it could

have been more spartan and cheaper to buy). Like its predecessors it departs from French practice by offering a pretty fair index. And like them it tells a fascinating tale, and tells it well. It differs from the previous volumes in that its authors, Michel Gervain, Marcel Jolivet and Yves Tavernier, have submerged their personal identities to produce one interpretation instead of three or four separate ones, with one coherent theme which is the integration of the rural into the modern industrial world, and of the semi-autonomous peasant economies into the capitalist system.

They provide masses of information on (almost) every aspect of peasant life: economy, politics, culture, mentalities—from *charivari* to cooperatives. They speak of women, so crucial to the young whose going followed feasts. Also of credit, at first reserved for them as had, now generalized, leading to the extinction of them as hasn't. Developments are placed in a context of broad class interests and struggles in French society and beyond. But the Marxist standpoint is tempered by respect for fact and scrupulous (if debatable) sociological analysis and interpretation. The *Lecteur averti* can find for himself, more suggestive view of issues that others have often (and often properly) treated in limited, local terms.

The authors, who read as one, which is an advantage because they read so well, of course treat of a period far shorter than those of earlier volumes had to cover. But the three-score years or so that have gone by since 1913 were so momentous for French agriculture gone before, because they have seen first the fulfilment and then the end of peasantry as a peculiar and peculiarly significant social group. On the eve of 1914, over 40 per cent of the active population turned out with a quarter of the GNP. By 1974 the rural work force numbered only 10 per cent of the total, a proportion now com-

parable to other Western countries, and accounted for only 6 per cent of GNP. The latter, however, makes a crucial contribution to the country's wealth, with foodstuffs exports covering (among other things) a large portion of the energy deficit.

The volume has a rather complicated structure, but the story it tells falls quite neatly into two parts, before the 1950s and after. The former began in the 1880s, whereby roads, railways, schools, print and military service brought the peasant into the market and into the nation: France. That was the time when national policy set out to stimulate not more efficient production but, as Jules Méline put it, more efficient protection. The logic of this went beyond reactionary calculations or electoral gimmickry. The peasant's legendary woolen stock, French savers made France the chief source of international credit. Limiting the country's agricultural production, protectionism helped to create the favourable balance of payments that allowed France to subsidize Russian railways and Romanian gasworks rather than cheap grain at home.

But revenues from capital invested abroad (more profitably in all likelihood than it could have been at home) depended in the end upon the peasant's thrift. Millenary misery had improved to splendour. Living continued, and a large degree of self-sufficiency survived. The low rent that land returned discouraged non-peasants and fostered ownership by those who relied on little help beside their families and were content with modest returns. Thus, in effect, protection did not jeopardize cheap bread.

The First World War wrought few radical changes. One it did bring revolves no attention: usury, the ubiquitous bane of centuries, luridly disappeared. An unprecedented cash flow paid off the village blood-suckers: notaire, or priest, or landlord. National prosperity, scarcely made for rural families, earnings grew at the same rate as other prices, which is more than

they had done in 1880-1914. Cheap grain had subsided as urban labour. Even more before the war, those who had to use little machinery and depend on family labour. Unskilled workers used their accumulated savings to pay off old debts and acquire land. Post-war inflation made them further, with the result that more peasants than ever made money of their holdings, but hardly ever used hired labour. Today nine out of ten peasants employ no permanent and, of those who do, nearly all quarters use one farmhand or more.

One essential aspect of the non remained unchanged. Food made cheap industrial life possible. In social struggle, only for hitherto replaced the bread, but still cheap food. The source of that lay in the holding worked by the family, cheap food in the cities and peasants too, and threatened survival of the family as a unit. The young were tempted by lighter workload and better conditions in the towns. Depression, then a second war, provided a respite at which the family remained the source of social security, as before, remained dubious family strained but held. As the peasant only lay down in the working unit fulfilled national role.

There were consolations: a fond, better and more modern world; that copied the modern which urban workers' radius (though rural electricity came late). The 1930s brought relative technical backwardness fitted the operating needs of family farm; and failure to adapt in the national economy. This was true as late as the 1940s, when relative backwardness was more obvious than in the cities. But general fort remained primitive. In nine out of ten rural families in houses built before 1915, of ten in homes over a century old in 1946, four houses out of

had electricity, but less than one in four had running water (they would be four out of five in 1970) and less than four in a hundred were connected to a sewer. As late as 1962, only nine per cent would have an indoor lavatory, and only six per cent a bath or shower; rural standards remain well below urban ones.

What came with the war (apart from *dorophores*) were confidence, cheap grain and the visible straits of urban labour. Even more city slickers, and a greater readiness to handle cash... and spend it on machinery, cooperatives, left-wing syndicates, and right-wing leagues had all worked together to raise the peasant's political consciousness (the leagues, incidentally, got little of his political education). Now, at last, peasants actually originated and led political and economic movements of their own, all stemming from the realization of relative poverty—not only material, but intellectual and moral as well. The *bonhomme Mère* still stalked over the land. Escape could only come, said the new peasant leaders, from the realization of relative poverty. Hence the technological revolution of the past twenty years, when enormous gains in productivity were achieved on a constant surface with a shrinking labour force. For the first time in her history France now produces more foodstuffs than she can consume. By 1974 she had become the second world exporter of agricultural products, far behind the United States but ahead of the Netherlands, Denmark and Canada.

The rural economy now joined the market with a vengeance; and higher productivity, revealed its costs. Between 1967 and 1970, 540,000 tons of fruit, 45,000 tons of cauliflower and tomatoes were destroyed to maintain prices. In 1974, 13 million hectolitres of wine, over a third of the harvest, had to be distilled. In 1975, 230,000 tons of apples were deliberately left to rot. In the early 1950s, over 70 per cent of French farms owned no tractor. By 1973 the number of tractors had increased tenfold; so had the debts incurred by peasants trying to modernize. The greater burden of debt meant that more of the weak went to the wall, and the exodus rural increased. Economists as well as peasant leaders agreed that this was good for the national economy, and production statistics seemed to bear them out. France, no longer the world's banker, had to achieve prosperity by competing in the world market, so agriculture had to enter the production race. Farmers were to produce for export and produce competitively, hence to modernize. Not savings but mort-

gages bore witness to successful adaptation, and the sons of thrifty peasants now amass debts as energetically as their forebears saved. Agriculture still contributes to the development of other industries by furnishing cheap goods and cheap labour, but it has also become an important client of banks and industry, and the trade balance would look still worse without it.

All this, strongly supported by self-generated agricultural organizations, completed the destruction of the peasantry had been the relative independence that maintained it, if not outside the market economy, at least on its margins. The new economic order has drawn farmers fully into the rest of the world, an urbanized and industrialized world in which they are now producers and consumers like everybody else.

Superficial differences subsist. Peasants eat twice as much bread as city folk, drink twice as much wine, and compare in general terms with urban workers even when the capital base of their enterprise is vastly greater than anything a workman would dream of. Yet, even compared with them, farmers' off-spring attend school less, universities far less, marry less and later, consume less and die sooner.

More important perhaps, the nature of rural living has changed radically. There are more unmarried men in villages, more old people (in many regions over-60s have tripled in a century), and fewer young. There are fewer people to help each other out in traditional ways, or to socialize. Neighbours no longer get together for *veillées*, because there are no neighbours. Clubs and associations waste away for lack of members. Municipal duties, as in the late Roman Empire, become compulsory or are simply not fulfilled. Church and school empty out, traditional feasts are abandoned, the young no longer fill their traditional functions and, anyway, the social lechery drives them away. They may return for the festivals which are, like regionalism, and the schools that taught it, inspired by urban intellectuals.

The village is no longer an autonomous, peculiar entity, nor a diversified social whole. It is a unit of the economy, a dormitory, a site for residence *secondaire*, an agricultural establishment. The earth is no longer the framework of a way of life, it is an instrument of production. The farmer, our authors claim, has become an instrument too. At any rate, the history of what used to be peasants lies come to its end.

## A shared sense of France

By Patrick McCarthy

FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND:  
Politique  
640pp. Paris: Fayard. 49fr.

In *Politique* François Mitterrand has published 600 pages of his speeches and articles from the late 1930s to the present. As an insight into French history they are disappointing. Although Mitterrand was a personal minister under the Fourth Republic, he seems never to have grasped the key issue of the 1950s: the spread of industrialization, guided by governmental subsidies and planning. He was directly responsible for Tunisia and Algeria but he had the wrong vision of their future. In 1953 he condemned the repression in Tunisia, but when the Algerian rebellion broke out the next year, he insisted that it be crushed. He was still caught up in myths of assimilation and of autonomy without independence. In an unfortunate piece of rhetoric he extolled France, the mother-country which bears the joys, much-needed tidings of civilization. When he became a socialist around 1970, Mitterrand learnt to talk plausibly about the inequities of multinational corporations and the inadequacies of Keynesian intervention. But he was simply drawing ideas which had been developed five or ten years earlier by Mendès-France and Michel Rocard. Indeed the comparison with Mendès is damning: an innovative thinker opposed to a mediocre one.

Yet Mendès is in the wilderness. The value of this book is that it shows the politician at work: it is a piece of discourse. Political discourse is the way a leader talks to his followers, presents socio-economic problems in language

while Mitterrand is the head of a strong, if in recent months rather bewildered, Socialist Party. At least twice, when de Gaulle returned to power in 1958 and after the May riots ten years later, Mitterrand seemed finished; yet each time he staged a comeback. What is the secret of his success? The short answer is that he is a consummate politician who excels at intrigue.

His earliest articles show a sense of history: at the age of twenty-one, he describes the Anschluss as a victory for Wagner over Mozart. This seems precious, but during his wartime captivity in Germany, he went on to write long pieces on Napoleon's German campaigns: their glory contrasts with his misery and the Second World War becomes part of an eternal Franco-German struggle. Already Mitterrand had a sense that French history from the seventeenth century to the present formed a block and that it was a part of everyday and everybody's life. The Communards and Louis XIV were not dead, they could be resurrected to explain the Resistance. During his 1974 campaign, Mitterrand said that the left would destroy the multinationals, as Richelieu had razed the fortified towns of southern France. He was inviting the electorate to see the left's innovations as a continuation of the French past.

Literature could be used in the same way. In 1964 Mitterrand quoted long chunks of Racine and Corneille in a parliamentary debate about atomic weapons. French listeners probably knew as little about *Andromaque* as about nuclear submarines, but *Andromaque* at least was familiar. They agreed that a man who could discuss the one was competent to judge the other. To Mitterrand Racine and Corneille were not primarily great writers; they were allies in his battle against de Gaulle.

## The Mirror

She cannot now regard herself as portraiture but only through this window open on a landscape rinsed to its essence drying slowly, stretched and hung there like her husband smiling at himself, while distantly the rain of course still falls as it should which is not on them.

John Mole

which they can understand and makes explicit what they feel. Mitterrand's real skill as a politician lies in his ability to communicate to others a sense of France which they can share. *Politique* abounds in literature and history because he sets each issue in a context. This context is more interesting than the content itself.

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Mitterrand's appeals to literature are often surprising: the Catholic writers Bernanos, Flaubert and Péguy are all mentioned in this book (Claude Roy claims that the first article Mitterrand ever wrote was on François Mauriac. It is not reprinted in *Politique*, which is a pity; it might be more revealing than the endless parliamentary speeches). Péguy's contempt for money is clearly one of the influences on Mitterrand's socialism. During the Epinay congress he issued an extraordinary diatribe against "the power of money, money that corrupts, money that

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and contended that congruence among apparently disparate roles of religious status, wealth, and power was always obtained at the village level in the persons of the dominant landed caste.

Fox sees this congruence between caste and land control, kinship and territory, achieved at the level of the local rather than the village. For Bernard Cohn such functional models as the segmentary state are mechanical and lifeless without the ideology or sets of meaning that informed them. He leans much more heavily towards Dumont's structuralism, although his own interests lie in the manner in which successive British images of India arose in response to the pressures of political expediency, a type of reductionism which ultimately would appear to negate his own argument about the shaping role of ideology in Indian political systems. In the same symposium, Henri Stier, an avowed disciple of Dumont, takes issue with Fox to deny any congruence between territoriality and kinship. In Rajasthan the Rajput "states" doubtless possessed certain territorial attributes but these were kept subordinate to the extraterritorial attributes of hypergamous marriage patterns; in true Dumontian language he points to "the encompassment of the manifestations of power by the hierarchical principle of status". Even for Burton Stein the segmentary state in southern India is of a special character composed of a multitude of local temple-oriented polities making the "shared sovereignty of human rulers and temple deities . . . the defining feature of pre-modern South Indian political communities." (*Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XIV, 1, 1977.) In the same number of this journal, Arjun Appadurai rejects even this degree of duality. In the role of temples as "redistributive centres, where gifts to deities enabled the continuous transformation of material resources into status and authority" he sees "a single system of authority relations [which] united religious and political interests and wedded them into a flexible and dynamic pan-regional network."

No wonder that for some anthropologists like McKim Marriott and Ronald Indon, who contribute to the article on caste in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1974), encompassing an inadequate conception of the South Asian mind process dualism between status and mind, or even between action or substance and idea, is the point at which the anthropological definition of the state in Indian culture, innocently weaves fresh myths for our use. For it is in but a short step from the intellectual games of the anthropologists to the mentality of a who believe they deserve the Wounded Civilization as a vision of reality that depicts them as Indians have an understanding of the individual from the objects, to quote his authority Delhi psychotherapist, Dr. B. Kakar, do "not have a separate independent existence but are intimately related to the self as affective states."

Here is another invented myth being taken over by Indians, as in Africa pseudo-scientific of the pre-logical savage mind, seized upon by political nationalists, then were taken over by the state, and finally back again as a pejorative into the hands of the modern. In this way the intellectual is being generated mystification, nonsense by allowing fixed, the models to be projected into the ready intermediaries of the mind within and between individuals.

Yet Brahmins rule Benares in Buddha-Gaya's ruins fit the lot. And bearded ascetics threaten To Buddha and Kanakura. But when the morning prayer Think, ere ye pass to strife Is God in human image made No nearer than Kanakura?

## In a backward place

By William Walsh

NEBBI MZEHIL  
Hymns in Darkness  
62pp. Oxford University Press.  
£1.25.

This is the first volume of poems for some twelve years by Nebbi Mzekiel, one of the best, certainly the most experienced and accomplished, of Indian poets writing in English. These poems are thinner and more occasional than his earlier work. Ezekiel's diction is mild and unemphatic, a matter of cool diction, moderate metaphor, of syntax rather than music, which fits his stance as a vigilant observer. His silence seems to be to disturb the himself concealed, to let things happen and be recorded undistorted by any distracting obsessions. The modesty and objectivity of his attitude, the neutrality of the medium, the self-restraint, provide the context in which the ordinary can reveal itself to be a tissue of the mysterious.

Warily, as to my way, I came Upon my own mind thinking. It moved with all it knew, but truly it was sinking, sinking. ("Mind") Ezekiel is an Indian Jew of Bene-Israel origin, belonging to a community long established in India, and in his own family English was of its nature. Of course it was a language discovered from a society constantly using and changing it, a language which to a greater degree than with native speakers had to reply for enrichment on books rather than on living use. Perhaps this accounts in Nebbi Mzekiel for the quality of inhibition one sometimes detects in his poetry, and the occasional oppressiveness of deliberation and control. Perhaps it is this discontinuity between the private voice and public usage that explains his awareness of the rust on some of his phrases.

The Indian landscape sears as I have become a part of it. To be observed by foreigners. They say that I am marginal. Their listeners overstate the distance. ("Background, Calcutta")

The discontinuity between Jewish descent and the Indian culture in which he lives, Ezekiel's poetry. A poem, expatriate in the Indian sense, is elected to stay. His eyes frequently are familiar with the distance from the object, and specifically Indian poetry is a ward and detached, away from limitations, a combination of a peculiar strength and grace.

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## Two cheers for autonomy

By Wilfred Stone

G. K. DAS:  
E. M. Forster's India  
189pp. Macmillan, £7.95.

In writing about his third visit to India in 1945, E. M. Forster remarked that "Indians have a marked capacity for worship, or for denunciation, but not much critical sense, as criticism is understood in the West". In *E. M. Forster's India* G. K. Das, Reader in English at the University of Delhi, has belied that statement. Here is criticism as it is understood in the West, and criticism of a high order. Dr Das delivers his admiration for Forster not as worship (as some of his countrymen do) but as an argument well buttressed with evidence. And denunciation—though the book, in its account of British rule and misrule in India, is rich in materials that could evoke it—is no part of Dr Das's (one) he lets the facts speak for themselves. This is by far the best account of Forster's encounter with India yet to appear; it is especially valuable for its documentation of the historical events behind *A Passage to India*—a gloss that makes the reading of that great novel an entirely new experience.

Dr Das sets out to discover what he calls Forster's "image of India". To this end he has consulted nearly everything Forster ever wrote or said about India—a surprisingly voluminous record consisting of some seventy-five articles and reviews, unpublished letters and diaries, interviews, and the two major works, *The Hill of Devi* and *A Passage to India*. Many of these materials are familiar and well studied, but what distinguishes Dr Das's work is his acute relating of Forster's ideas and attitudes and experiences to the historical realities they reflect. One result is that the Forster emerges as a far wiser and more astute political thinker, especially in the years during and right after the First World War—

than most critics have given him credit for.

In an important chapter entitled "Forster's Concept of a 'Democratic Empire'", Dr Das argues that Forster believed "the Indian Empire could have been . . . an enduring institution had it been founded on the basis of social equality between the British and the Indians". John Beer, who writes a most useful foreword to this volume, disagrees with Das here, maintaining that the Empire was lost whatever happened. Without arguing the issue, we can certainly agree with Dr Das that the British Empire in India would have been a better show had Forster's idealism shaped its policies. Dr Das, with acknowledgment to one Raghavendra Iyer, cites the four ruling doctrines: the Burkean doctrine of trusteeship, the Utilitarian doctrine of progressive reform, the Platonic idea of a ruling elite, and the Evangelical belief in the spread of the Gospel for the benefit of the heathen. Forster rejects them all, and for one essential reason: they all assume the superiority of the white man and his culture to the Indian. Nations and races must relate, Forster believed, just as friends do—on a basis of equality. It is impressive that an Indian as well versed in his country's history as Dr Das is should so wholeheartedly agree.

Dr Das provides detailed documentation of the radical change in the political atmosphere of India between the time of Forster's first visit in 1912-13 and his second in 1921-22—a change deeply imprinted in *A Passage to India*. At the earlier date, many educated Indians (like Aziz or like the Hindu Das who presided at Adela's trial) were in the Civil Service and were willing to take on British ways and loyalties; but by the later date—thanks to unrelenting racism and injustice—the relations between India and Anglo-India had deteriorated beyond repair. The incident that was etched unforgettably in the Indian consciousness was the 1919 massacre at Amritsar, where General Reginald Dyer, taking an uprising, ordered British troops to fire on a

peaceful, if illegal, gathering of Indians. Hundreds were killed or wounded.

This atrocity was merely the worst of other humiliations and outrages. Earlier that year a Miss Sherwood had been assaulted by six Indians, an event which prompted Dyer to issue his notorious "crawling order", requiring all Indians passing through the lane where the attack took place to go on all fours. (This event may have suggested the presumed attack on Adela in *Passage*, and is certainly reflected in Mrs. Turton's remark: "Why, they ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishwoman's in sight . . .") These and other outrages made the success of Gandhi's independence movement a virtual

certainty, bringing together Hindus and Muslims in the common hatred of British rule reflected in the "Hindu-Muslim entente" mentioned in *Passage*.

The events surrounding the Amritsar massacre were, writes Dr Das,

absorbed centrally into the story of *A Passage to India*—in spirit if not always in literal fact. When Romy Heaslop says "I am out here . . . to hold this wretched country by force, I'm not a missionary or a Labour Member or a vague sentimental sympathetic literary man . . . We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant" he speaks in the voice of those Anglo-Indians who called General Dyer the "Hero of the Hour" and "The Saviour of India".

So the failure of friendship between Aziz and Fielding in the novel—which some have read as Forster's pessimistic comment on the human condition in general—is really a direct reflection of a specific political failure. This is not to deny Forster's assertion that politics is of "secondary or tertiary importance" in the novel; it is only to emphasize that in this last and greatest of his novels he achieved the ideal of connection—between the worldly and the spiritual, the political and the personal, the outer and the inner, the seen and the unseen—far more successfully than he ever did in *Howards End*. If, as Dr Das says, Forster could observe the dissolution of Empire "without a sense of loss", it was because his politics were based on friendship and not on domination. That friendship, as this book attests, still endures.

There was a need for a book of this kind which Dr Das fulfils impressively, but a few things are puzzling or disappointing. Why, one wonders, does he make so little of the caves in *Passage*, where politics and everything else gets shaped up? And is there not some special pleading in his last, tacked-on, chapter, "Some Aspects of Hinduism and Islam", where he argues that Forster prefers Hinduism to Islam, and elsewhere, where he claims that Muslims think Hindus "more advanced"? Also, Dr Das's style is sometimes flawed by qualities conspicuous by their absence in Forster's: repetitiveness, wordiness, an overabundance of adverbs. Finally, one must lament the proof-reading, or absence thereof, so characteristic of publishing these days. I would retain, however, one inspired slip—the printing of "forward-looking" for "forward-looking" in reference to Britain's imperial policy.

But these are quibbles. This is a mature and valuable book, for both the scholar and the common reader. One comes away from it with much new knowledge, but also with a renewed respect for the political wisdom as well as art of that "vague sentimental sympathetic literary man", E. M. Forster.

## Distance in Statute Miles

On maps it always takes  
The same position: away from the coastline,  
Two inches below  
The mountain range. But the man  
Who is turning the page doesn't know  
That it is flat as a blade, more  
Vulnerable than a child, inaccessible  
By road or air. It is in front of me.  
I can see the towers  
From my window, I call out  
And it responds to its name  
It is easily frightened  
This is a winter afternoon and the sun  
Makes unequal rectangles  
Of light in each courtyard, by evening  
The birds will again be visible.  
Far from us, near the river  
Which was once leased out to fishermen,  
A small East German tractor is sending up smoke.

Arvind Krishna Mehrotra

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## Under western eyes

By Francis Haskell

PARTHA MITTER:  
Much Maligned Monsters  
History of European Reactions to  
Indian Art  
372pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford  
University Press. £12.50.

Partha Mitter has written a remarkably interesting book about a failure—the failure of West European culture to come to terms with the Hindu arts of India. That judgment needs qualification, but a moment's reflection on what the concept of China has meant, say, to Boucher and a succession of inspired collectors, or on the impact of Japanese prints on Degas or African carving on Picasso, will give some indication of what is implied by it at the most obvious level. Of their equivalents in terms of India, Rodges and the two Daniels are attractive artists, Sozinote a delightful house—but we are clearly dealing with talents of a quite different order.

The problem, however, is not confined to artists—though their importance should not be underestimated. Again and again as he approaches the twentieth century, Dr Mitter produces for us some historian, scholar or philosopher and asks, at the end of a thoughtful discussion of his views, whether he was "able to bring us any closer to a real appreciation of Indian art" only to answer the question with a reluctant negative.

In this context a reviewer may feel slightly less daunted if he is wholly unable to live up to the implied, and probably justified, demands made by an aggrieved author in these pages a few weeks ago to the effect that "studies of the inter-connections between the art of the East and West are unlikely to make much headway until undertaken by scholars versed equally in the history of Oriental and Occidental art". And in any case Dr Mitter's book is too fascinating to be recommended only to lovers of India, for although he himself sticks very closely to his sub-title, it is impossible not to find oneself asking why the other great non-European cultures should have met with such a few of the obstacles to admiration, if not true understanding, that are here described.

Dr Mitter is, of course, very much aware that "Hindu art, and the treatment of Hindu figure sculpture and iconography in particular" presented special problems of assimilation, and he argues that to understand the reasons for this we need to turn back to the end of the Middle Ages "because it was then that the attitudes were formed and the germs of later reactions firmly planted". Following Ernst Gombrich, Dr Mitter explains that early travellers to India tended to see there largely what they had been taught to expect, and that the particular nature of Hindu religious art made its objects exceptionally easy to confuse with the demons so vividly described and exorcised by Christian teachers.

Although by the seventeenth century sophisticated observers had dismissed this view and were making tentative, but very serious, attempts to understand Hindu iconography, Dr Mitter seems to imply that the very long formative period, during which a restricted number of visitors saw and described Hindu gods in terms of monsters, continued to affect attitudes to art until the nineteenth century. If only indirectly, that prejudice of this kind played a part in hindering recognition of the later achievements need not be doubted, but on the evidence provided by the author I cannot help feeling that the relatively "enlightened" period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may have been more responsible for the negative impact made by Indian art on European taste than the superstitious epoch which preceded it.

Dr Mitter points out how frequently even the most hostile travellers were impressed by the skill of Indian artists, and how often they paid reluctant homage to the sheer beauty of their craftsmanship; by the nineteenth century indeed many people seem to have been driven

into protesting almost too shrilly that however admirable Indian artists might be, their achievements could not—should not—be compared to the great canonical works of the classical world.

But this, paradoxically, may have constituted a drawback. The history of the assimilation by one culture of another quite frequently shows that some element of the apparently primitive and childish is required if it is to "take". The very obvious accomplishment of so much Indian architecture and sculpture—an accomplishment which was grudgingly recognized by most travellers—would have rendered it almost untenable the theory that it was, like medieval painting or African carving or even, Egyptian or early Greek sculpture, striving to achieve greater maturity and realism. And yet it was, all too demonstrably, striving to achieve something. But what? It is here that the baffling iconographical problem becomes of crucial importance. Just because the craftsmanship is so great and the imagery so insistent, Europeans have necessarily always been forced to see Indian sculpture primarily in terms of something vague and incomprehensible, in a way that has never applied to the art of other cultures.

The most immediately comprehensible aspect of that imagery was, of course, the sexual, and during one phase of the so-called Renaissance Orientalism of the second half of the eighteenth century, this aspect of Hindu culture was much

studied in order to bolster the various theories of comparative religion and mythology that were so popular during this period.

Dr Mitter has traced (and reproduced) the erotic sculpture from the Townley collection in the British Museum, which is familiar from a fine plate in Payne Knight's *Discourse on the Worship of Priapus* of 1786, and a number more were published at almost the same time by Townley and Payne Knight's curious guru, d'Hancarville. Indeed, in these circles, the attention, but in nearly every case the context makes it clear that (when not pornographic) the interest was sociological and psychological rather than artistic, and that all three men were concerned with Indian art only in so far as it helped to throw light on the Greek and Roman heros, and exclusive veneration. If Dr Mitter is correct in claiming that Payne Knight, Dupuis, and others had led to a new appreciation of Indian art, I cannot help feeling that such a consequence was incidental rather than integral to their main purpose. I am, in any case, not convinced by his repeated claim that it was "largely accidental" that Gothic rather than the English national style of architecture, alas, the greatest impact of Indian art on English architecture can probably be found in the much later decoration of the villas of retired officers in Bourne and Cheltenham.

Even when theorists were concerned to assign to Indian art its true place in the hierarchy of world culture there is an uncanny distance from concrete reality. In Dr Mitter's book it is to be seen the contrast between, on the one hand, English army officers, to whom the Indian art was a curiosity and on the other, the role in the representation of the temples for *Archaeologia* and a whole variety of references to the works of art and they are most notably on the basis of literary descriptions. Obviously no one would accuse Coomaraswamy (the first hand, but—as described here—the substance almost vanishes) of a cloud of metaphysical speculations. Dr Mitter concludes that "the fact that even he ultimately looked upon European standards as evaluating his predecessors and argues that we need to restore the religious, cultural and social contexts of Indian art. In the process we shall have to make a conscious effort to be what actual standards of art criticism were in operation among those Indians who had seen these works and among those whom they were created.

Not to endorse this would mean to a refusal to condemn it, but I am not sure that it will lead to a more widespread (as opposed to deeper) appreciation of that impact made by alien images that usually been effective in so far as these have been most fruitfully misinterpreted: medieval painting because of its "innocence", Japanese print because of its "tutious" help it was able to give the Impressionists, and so on.

A few (very speculative and doubtful) arguments with Mitter over the tenor of some of his conclusions—and a wish that had, at times, allowed himself characterize briefly some of a finger east of often unfamiliar figures he introduces to us—may be intended in any way to obscure a very great interest of his book which is clearly written and well planned.

A number of complicated arguments are concisely summarized and a number of issues raised that will fascinate all students of the human mind between the seventh and nineteenth centuries: the question of textile decoration and design which rightly loomed so large in mid-Victorian England is, of course given prominence, but there are many others which will be as less familiar. Dr Mitter has frequently chosen to reproduce photographs of existing works of art next to illustrations of them made by travellers and earlier students and the publishers have placed these so as to compare the relevant passages of his text so that the book can be read in case. Whether or not the author achieves success for his cause, winning deeper understanding of Indian art, its account of the forces that seem so far to have attended that cause makes a thrilling story.



Dancing Siva from Ellora, one of the illustrations to R. M. Grindlay's articles on the Ellora Caves in *The Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1830; reproduced in *Much Maligned Monsters*.

## Painters of the Punjab

By Simon Digby

F. S. AJAZUDDIN:  
Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits  
in the Lahore Museum  
270pp with 110 illustrations. Sotheby  
Palace, Berners/Oxford University  
Press (Delhi and Karachi). £25.

The Lahore Museum was founded in 1870, its first director being J. Lockwood Kipling, father of the novelist. As Lahore was the capital of the undivided province of the Punjab, J. L. Kipling's successors (among them the historian of Indian architecture, Percy Brown) were able to build up a very extensive collection of the paintings produced at the courts of the Hindu princely states of the Punjab Himalaya. At the time of partition,

about one third of these paintings were sent to Chandigarh in India. The remainder could hardly be seen as part of the specifically Muslim inheritance of Pakistan, and they have awaited the attention of a catalogue for over thirty years.

As regards the end-product, this Sotheby has been wholly beneficial, for as an international art publisher has enabled them to produce a volume of a sumptuousness and distinction which could hardly have been attained locally, though it is sad to reflect how few artists able to afford its price. The colour plates in particular are excellent.

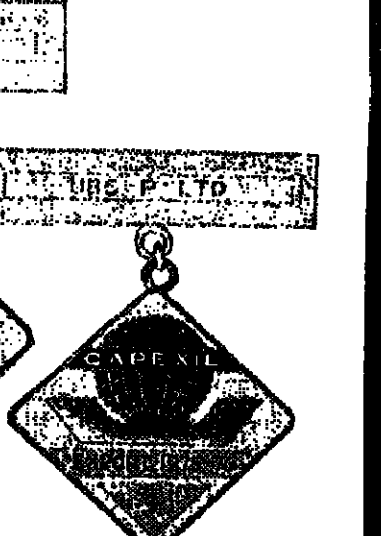
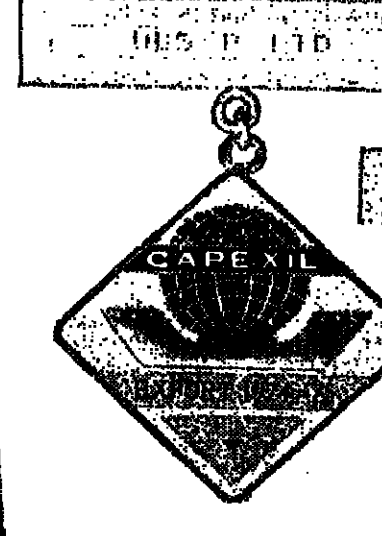
Beyond this, during the past three decades, the dialogue between Dr W. G. Archer and a number of Indian scholars has greatly enlarged our knowledge of painting in the Punjab hills and its capital context. F. S. Ajazuddin, who writes well and emerges as an art-historian

of distinction, pays generous tribute to his Indian predecessors and Dr Archer, in arrangement of material and methodology by F. S. Archer's monumental *Pahari Paintings from the Punjab Hill States* (1973). Dr Archer in his foreword describes the volume as "an inevitable sequel and complement to his own study."

The last portion of the catalogue deals with portraits from the Punjab mostly dating from 1640 to 1840. They are in fact a continuation of the Pahari tradition, with the families of painters now working for new masters. Once again the Lahore Museum was in an important position to acquire and hold many of these portraits. Among them, approximately, is a portrait of the emperor's ancestor Feroz Nizuddin, who was the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and at one time governor of the city.

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By John Rosselli

C. H. PHILIPS (Editor):  
The Correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck: Governor-General of India 1828-1835.  
Two volumes  
1,483pp. Oxford University Press. £55.

Lord William Bentinck's administration has for some time been regarded as a turning-point in the history of British India. A period of notable success, with the impact of European notions of liberal reform, of administrative efficiency, and of economy. The new Governor-General was bold enough—some observers, Sir Cyril Phillips among them, have at times been prepared to call him rash—to abolish Hindu widows' right to self-immolation; in a famous resolution put through just before his departure he upheld Macaulay's view that government funds should go to support English higher education alone, though in this, as in some other matters, Bentinck's practical arrangements fell considerably short of his utterances.

Perhaps most important, the 1830s were the time when a Hindu elite, newly schooled in English literature and English ideas, came forward and began to claim share, first in the administration of British India, and then, more tentatively, in the working out of ideas and policy. Bentinck was eager to meet this Indian elite more than halfway: indeed the confidence with which he looked to the Indianizing of the administration was not open to any of his successors.

until near the very end of British rule. Sir Cyril, in a long introduction to the documents now culled from Bentinck's private papers at Nottingham University, concludes that Bentinck "created a dialogue between rulers and ruled... which enhanced the quality of government and public life"; he is, however, critical of what he sees as Bentinck's clumsiness and lack of flair as a leader of men, and of his readiness to throw out ideas for change without mobilizing the support needed to put them through.

The two volumes contain more than 800 documents; these include both official minutes and dispatches and private correspondence. The papers cover almost the whole of the multifarious business of Indian government; a good deal of space is given to the proposed reorganization of the East India Company's army—a subject on which Bentinck was rightly fearful of trouble to come, expended much thought—as well as to the often awkward relations with the Indian princely states and with China, Burma, and other far-flung Indian territories. There is a rich series of letters between Bentinck and individual directors and officials of the Company at home, and between the Supreme Government and the governors of Madras and Bombay. Land revenue administration, another matter to which Bentinck gave much time and labour, is scantily represented, perhaps because several historians have already drawn on the relevant part of the papers.

The collection should be of considerable use to students of an important period in Indian history. Unfortunately the editing is technically not all that one would hope for; it falls some way short of the standards set by A. Aspinall in his

great series of George III and George IV papers. There are a number of errors of transcription, whether the result of misprints, misreadings, or over-enthusiastic editing is not always clear. A few examples, with what I take to be the correct reading in square brackets: "Lord Dalhousie... is very inferior (inferior) in his spirits" (page 634); "I account it rather to their ignorance of time than their [their] laziness and loitering habits" (page 719); "... old commercial associations [associations] and prejudices in favour of Calcutta" (page 1279); "the vanity [vanity] of views and opinions..." (page 1354). Arundel appears as "Arundel" (page 733) and "Arundel" as "justi millar" (page 1245). Although I have not been able to check this passage I do not doubt its accuracy—the younger son of a duke—over referred to his wife as Lady Bentinck (page 1206); she was always Lady William.

These errors and others like them are not overwhelming, and most of them, taken singly, are of little consequence (though the second passage referred to above, in the sense of the context, is more troublesome). It is difficult to see on what principle it has been done: certainly not on the principle of indexing every word. Thus Mr. Hurky on page 1248 seems to be the same person as Mr. Bushby on page 1264, but neither is indexed. Mr. W. Elliot on pages 904 and 905 is indexed, our friend Elliot on page 1318 is not; Mr. Hosseson is indexed on pages 1096 and 1250 but not on page 1233. In the latter two instances the unindexed references are the more interesting. This valuable pair of books therefore needs to be used with a touch of both caution and persistence.

## India Portuguesa

By C. R. Boxer

GEORG SCHURHAMMER SJ:  
Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times  
Volume 2: India 1541-1545  
Translated by M. Joseph Costelloe  
759pp. Jesuit Historical Institute. £13.50.

The first volume of the English version of this stupendous work, covering Xavier's life in Europe, from 1506 to 1541, was favourably reviewed in the TLE, April 19, 1977. The anonymous reviewer wrote of Georg Schurhammer's scholarship: "It may be said to represent the finest traditions of German erudition, and to suffer from the corresponding defects". It may be said of this volume, which, like the first, is admirably translated by M. Joseph Costelloe, who has rearranged some of the contents of the original second and third volumes to better advantage.

Schurhammer has sometimes been teased with not seeing the wood for the trees. It is certainly true that the weight of his second volume, and his fondness for lengthy textual digressions and expansive footnotes combine to render the whole work a "Labyrinth of time" in which the reader is often submerged in the latter for pages on end. Schurhammer's disliking of speculative writing and his lack of any real psycho-history to complement his inner life. But Xavier was seldom very expansive about his interior experience, and Schurhammer was understandably reluctant to go beyond his sources.

Just as Volume 1 was not only a biography but a history of the origins of the Society of Jesus, so this volume is as much—or more—a history of the Society of Jesus in the sixteenth century. Not only are Xavier's activities narrated in great detail, but often those of virtually everyone he met, or might have met. For example, although Xavier was never in Abyssinia, he gave a detailed account of the Portuguese expedition which saved that isolated Christian kingdom from being conquered by the Muslims (1541).

44). One of the most fascinating sections is Schurhammer's penetrating analysis of the Portuguese (and other) chroniclers and historians who wrote on the temporal and spiritual conquests of their companions in Asia. This, an appendix, is a model of its kind, particularly the pages in which he establishes the unacknowledged debt of Diogo do Couto (1543-1616) to the Augustinian missionary-friar, Agostinho de Azevedo, from whom the crux of his chronicle copied wholesale without the slightest acknowledgement. There is also an interesting appendix on sailing manuals and travelogues of the Portuguese *carreira da India* (round voyage between Lisbon and Goa). This covers the years 1497 to 1753, although Xavier only made the voyage in one direction in 1541-42.

Schurhammer takes 147 pages to bring Xavier from Lisbon to Goa, including his ports of call at Mozambique Island, Malindi and Socotra. Since Xavier himself was seldom interested in describing the scenery of the places which he visited, being overwhelmingly concerned with saving souls, his biographer more than makes up for this omission. In the course of a long life, the tireless German Jesuit covered nearly all the land and sea traversed by Xavier, save only in Indonesia, where political difficulties prevented him from visiting the Celebes (Sulawesi) and the Moluccas. Compendious and minutely and accurately described, if not in Xavier's own words, at least in those of his devoted biographer. He has supplemented his personal knowledge from other sources, ranging from sixteenth-century letter leakers to twentieth-century Pilot-Handbooks and Gazetteers.

Having got Xavier as far as Goa, Schurhammer gives us a survey of the Estado da India (State of India) as the Portuguese called the chain of the coastal forts "ramparts" and the settlements between (Sofala, 1505) and Macao (1557). Xavier lost no time in establishing an apostolate at "Golden Coast" reforming the morals of the dissolute soldiers and *casados* (married men) in the Portuguese community, and preaching to the local Hindus and Muslims. But it is only with Book 3 that we get down to Xavier's basic missionary work among the Faravay, Coas, Pandey,

and other Indian peoples on both sides of Cape Comorin, where he worked for two years from 1542 to 1544. Book 4 deals with the Portuguese punitive expedition to the Hindu Tamil kingdom of Jaffnapattam in northern Sri Lanka (December 1544 to April 1545) in which Xavier participated, and with the (more evangelized) four months he spent in São Tomé da Malindi. The last chapter gives Schurhammer the chance, which he eagerly seizes, to digress at great length on the tradition of St Thomas and the tomb ascribed to the Apostle. He gives full play to his unsurpassed erudition in analysing and evaluating the vast and controversial literature on this subject.

As regards personalities, Fr Costelloe observes that Schurhammer eschewed value judgments and left enough to the unwary reader to make him gather from Schurhammer's rather coyly worded note on page 544, that the Governor, Martin Afonso de Sousa, was an unscrupulous scoundrel in most respects, though an exceptionally fine seaman and a personal friend of Xavier.

Schurhammer had spent some years in India, and he tried to keep himself abreast of Indian history and research until he died. This is reflected in the footnotes and bibliography, although one notices the omission of the invaluable *India Economic and Social History* review.

As noted above, the translation reads very smoothly and is much easier going than the ponderous German original; but Fr Costelloe need not have perpetuated Schurhammer's deliberately anachronistic designation of all Muslims between Morocco and Mindanao as "Moors". While some readers may be disappointed at the lack of speculation about Xavier's inner life, those who are primarily interested in early European expansion, or in comparative mission history, will find this truly monumental work an indispensable guide and quarry.

A Young Man's Country, compiled by the letters of a Subdivisional Officer of the Indian Civil Service, W. S. Samudra, Delhi, written in 1956-57 (122pp. Wilson, Wills, Michael Russell, £4.85). Samudra Smith was posted to Madras at the age of twenty-five and had a million people in his jurisdiction.

## Wealth and death in Bengal

By Lucy Sutherland

P. J. MARSHALL:  
East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century  
284pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £7.75.

P. J. Marshall has added another to the growing list of his learned, perceptive and well-argued studies of the British in eighteenth-century India. *East Indian Fortunes* is based on extensive use of manuscript sources in this country supplemented by others preserved in India, where the records of the Mayor's Court and Supreme Court of Calcutta have proved particularly fruitful. In his exhaustive use of secondary sources he has had the advantage of a number of detailed studies bearing on this subject which have been appearing in India in recent years. The title of the book is strictly accurate. It is not an economic or social history of eighteenth-century Bengal, nor of the trading and administrative activities of the East India Company there, though it illuminates both; nor is it just a series of biographies of those Englishmen whom their contemporaries called the "Nabobs". It is a study of the way in which, between 1704 and 1784, a number of individuals who came to Bengal from Britain, mostly (though not all) as covenanted servants of the East India Company, furthered their individual material ambitions in the search for what they called an "independence" or a "competence". In so doing, though their numbers were small and their objectives strictly limited (and by no means always achieved), they came to impinge on every aspect of life in contemporary Bengal in their private as well as in their

public capacities, and prepared the way, and to a considerable degree determined the course, of future English imperial expansion.

To make their achievements comprehensible it is necessary to bear in mind three quite separate considerations. In the first place there was the distinction between the activities which most of these men were carrying out for failing to carry out under the orders of the company and their public function, the individual trading and financial pursuits by which they supplemented their admittedly inadequate salaries. As time went on the company made increasing attempts to control their private activities and to prohibit them altogether for those who held the most responsible positions; but was widely accepted that private trade was not only inevitable, but advantageous to all. In consequence these men came to build up a network of so-called private trade within Bengal itself and by sea throughout Asia which supplemented the company's activities in the nineteenth century [it replaced them altogether].

In the second place the nature of the society into which this small body of men intruded must be understood. Dr Marshall warns the reader of the danger of analogy with other fields of expansion. In these it may be reasonable to speak of the "impact" of Europeans on indigenous societies. But in Bengal "for much of the eighteenth century it would be more appropriate to discuss the impact of Bengal on the British". Bengal indeed provided a special case illustrating the experience of Europeans in Asia.

In the early centuries of overseas expansion European trading in Asia were in a very different

situation to those in the western hemisphere. Rather than creating their own economic systems, they had to adapt themselves to conditions which had been flourishing for centuries and into which European changes before the nineteenth century... Bengal was no exception. Even after they had conquered the province, the British could not hope to remodel its economy like other merchants before them, they had to adapt themselves to conditions they found there. But the rewards for successful adaptation were high. Bengal offered fine commercial opportunities, abundant labour, a productive agriculture, highly developed handicraft industries and a relatively advanced system of currency and credit.

This quotation leads on to the third consideration which must be borne in mind, one peculiar to Bengal—its sudden and complete conquest after the battle of Plassey, 1756. Dr Marshall rightly stresses how much went on unobserved under the new masters in the economic as well as in the administrative fields, but the changes in power and by personnel were traumatic and irreversible. The men whose fortunes he is these changes. The seniors, both civil and military, obtained vast estates which were in fact the last of successful war. Clive, who rightly obtained the lion's share, estimated his wealth in 1767 at over £400,000. Bengal was carried with them great opportunities for trade and monopoly. Even the Free Merchants, whose activities had been rigorously restricted by the company's servants hitherto, profited by the free-for-all. Dr Marshall, with his intimate knowledge of the period, judges that during the twelve years following Plassey, and in that period alone, any com-

pany servant who remained alive could make a fortune. George Vancouver, younger brother of the explorer, and by no means one of the most ruthless of them, wrote in 1771: "We are men of power, you may say, and take the advantage of it. Why are we not to benefit from it? And the business-like Francis Baring, enjoying a much bigger fortune, justified his profits at Murshidabad: "It was this, whether it should go into a blackman's pocket or my own."

One of the most interesting parts of the book deals with the way in which after this crisis order was restored, though not by the end of the period it deals with, replaced by a new order which was notably less corrupt. It was, however, becoming increasingly the corollary of a bureaucratically controlled and competitively independent mercantile class. Company servants began to seek their gains in office and to leave to the Free Merchants more purely mercantile pursuits. Just as happened in seaborne trade (the development of which is studied in two illuminating chapters) so in the internal trade of Bengal we can see the Free Merchants, once economically insignificant, evolving into the great agency houses with which the future of British trade was to rest.

As Dr Marshall points out, most that has been written about the men whose activities he studies "has been concerned with passing judgment on them". He refuses to do only because such judgments are necessarily anachronistic, but because the great importance of the activities which were the subject of so many polemics... For all his empirical study of his subjects, his work provides the raw material on which biographers may work, as may the historians of many aspects of Indian life.

runes in Bengal". He is cautious of generalizations about the events of these years in Bengal, it only because of the great gaps in our knowledge of its social and economic history, and even more cautious about the significance of the private activities which are the subject of his study.

He has, however, brought out two things unequivocally. In the first place he has worked out most ingeniously an order of magnitude of the sums reaching England by remittance between 1757 and 1794. He warns that their interpretation is not easy, but he shows that remittance on private account from Bengal during these years ran at an average of £300,000 a year. In the second place he shows how narrowly based this wealth was.

All who had experience of India knew that the number of men who made fortunes in India was small. Everyone, experienced or not, knew that Bengal was an unhealthy climate. Dr Marshall has brought together two facts of statistics. Of the 645 appointments made to Bengal between 1707 and 1775, 368 (or 57 per cent) of them died there—and sooner rather than later. In the worst decade, 1747 to 1756, 74 per cent of them were never to come back. For the army the figures were even more grim. About 25 per cent of Europeans serving in the regiments died every year. As Dr Marshall comments, "Even the civil servants... whose chances of survival seem to have been the highest, were cut down in most of the eighteenth century at a rate comparable with that of soldiers in the Western Front in the First World War or the crew of British bombers in the Second". Writers were appointed at or shortly after the age of sixteen or seventeen and those who came home with fortunes were seldom much above forty. It is no wonder that Marshall's intention to offer a biographical study of his subjects, his work provides the raw material on which biographers may work, as may the historians of many aspects of Indian life.

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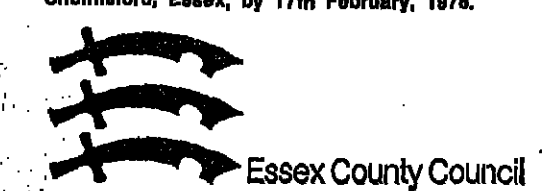
*The Modes of Modern Writing*, by David Lodge, which was reviewed in the TLS on January 13, is priced at £9.50 and not £8.95 as stated; it is not available in paperback.

In fact, the author seems to be aware of this gap between his intention and his information and

The only two chapters to escape such cavalier treatment are those on the historical geography of the mahajanapada and its dynastic history. The former represents perhaps the only thing of any substance at all in this book. No such claim can be made for the other chapters, with their uncritical and almost exclusive dependence on

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